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Book Reviews.

Vom irdischem Gut. Vier biblischen Ansprachen uber Luke 12:13-34. VON DR. BERNHARD WEISS. Pp. 45.

These four expository sermons, which are well worth reading as sermons, contain an uncommon explanation of the parable of the rich fool. Most find in this parable nothing more than a powerful presentation "in concrete lively form" of "a moral commonplace." Dr. Weiss thinks that we must go deeper. The context shows that our Lord has just to all intents and purposes been offered the Messianic crown. He had been applied to as the highest authority in Israel, and had refused to entertain the application, because he could not be judge and arbiter until he had become Saviour and Redeemer. When he proceeded to utter this parable, the thought of his poor people was still in his mind. "He knew only too well how this people on which had been bestowed the best of blessings, that many prophets and kings had desired to see and had not seen,—this people which hoped that it had found in him the goal of its wishes, was moving toward a more terrible disappointment than the farmer experienced in the night of his decease, because it strove only to collect earthly treasures and not to be rich toward God." This striking exposition, which need not exclude that usually adopted, deserves careful consideration.

W. TAYLOR SMITH.

The Earliest Life of Christ ever compiled from the four Gospels, being *The Diatessaron of Tatian*, literally translated from the Arabic Version and containing the Four Gospels woven into one story; with an historical and critical introduction, notes, and appendix. By the Rev. J. HAMLYN HILL, B.D. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1894. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Company. 8vo, pages 8+379. Price, \$4.20.

It is a pleasure to call attention to this book, which puts before the English reader an ancient work whose discovery in very recent times—or to speak more exactly, whose publication, since the existence of the manuscript in the Vatican Library had been known since 1719—has been regarded by scholars as one of the highest importance in its bearing on the criticism of the gospels.

In his article on Tatian in the *Smith & Wace Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Professor Fuller begins the section on the *Diatessaron* with the sentence, "The history of the recovery of this work is sufficiently romantic." But when that sentence was written the *Diatessaron* itself had not been published, and the most interesting chapter of the romantic history was, in a sense, still to be written. From the days of Victor, Bishop of Capua, who died A. D. 554, until

the year 1888 the Diatessaron itself practically disappeared from view, though evidence that it had once existed, or was even still in existence, did not wholly perish.

In 1836 there was published at Venice, from two manuscripts discovered in the monastery of S. Lazzaro, what was believed to be—and is now known to be—an Armenian Version of a Syraic commentary of Mar Ephraem, a Syrian Christian of the fourth century, on the Diatessaron of Tatian. This publication in a language little known to European scholars attracted little attention. In 1876 Dr. G. Moesinger of Salzburg, published a Latin version of the Armenian work. Even this, however, escaped notice for several years, Dr. Ezra Abbot being the first to call attention to it. In 1881, Professor Zahn, employing the evidence of Ephraem as published by Moesinger, and the quotations in the Homilies of Aphraates, published a reconstruction of the text of Tatian's Diatessaron. Zahn's work led Ciasca, one of a guild of scholars attached to the Vatican Library, to examine an Arabic manuscript preserved in that library, which, according to the statement of the scribe made at the end of the manuscript itself, was the Diatessaron of Tatian, and to announce his intention of publishing it. In 1886, before he had been able to realize this purpose, a second Arabic manuscript, similar to the Vatican copy, but furnishing additional valuable evidence tending to establish the identity of both, was brought to light in Egypt, sent to Rome, and made accessible to Ciasca. On the basis of these two manuscripts, Ciasca published in 1888 the Arabic Diatessaron with a Latin version. This publication makes it impossible to doubt that Tatian's work was based upon four gospels, and that these four were the Matthew, Mark, Luke and John that we have to-day.

The present work of Mr. Hill contains (1) an introduction, telling in full the story of the Diatessaron briefly sketched in the preceding lines, (2) an English version carefully conformed to the Arabic text of Ciasca, with a margin showing the portion of our gospels employed by Tatian at any given point, and (3) a series of valuable appendices as follows: I. A comparative table showing section by section the contents of the Arabic Diatessaron, Zahn's reconstruction, Ephraem's commentary, the Codex Fuldensis of Victor's Harmony, and three modern harmonies; II. An index of passages of the gospels in the Diatessaron; III. Various readings of the Arabic Diatessaron; IV, V, VI, VII. Classified lists of the events of the gospels as contained in the Diatessaron; VIII. Principal allusions to the Diatessaron in ancient writings; IX. Note on Zahn's order as compared with that of the Arabic manuscripts; X. Text of Ephraem's quotations; XI. Modern Literature.

It is not our present purpose to offer a critical review of Mr. Hill's work—this we hope to do later—but to call attention to it as putting before New Testament students whose ignorance of Arabic prevents their making full use of Ciasca's work, as well as to all to whom the earlier literature is inaccessible, an approximately full presentation of the facts respecting this most interesting ancient work.

E. D. B.